

the Code Napoleon in the Supreme Court of the United States, where it required a very thorough investigation to discover what the French body upon this ruling was. The Supreme Court came to the conclusion that under the French code you could recover for death; but they came to the further conclusion that there was no privity or knowledge of the owners, and that, therefore, they had a right in the *Bourgogne* case, in the case of the collision of a French with a British ship, to go into the French courts, surrender freight money, and escape all liability. These provisions have been on the statute books from time immemorial. We have a bill now in the Judiciary Committee attempting to remedy these obsolete provisions of our navigation laws, and they ought to be remedied, because nearly every other civilized government has adopted statutes in reference to them.

There is another lesson that this disaster teaches us and which ought to be one of general application, and that is the lesson of corporate responsibility. We must enact legislation that will make the controlling and superior officers of corporations within our own jurisdiction criminally responsible for the careless and negligent management of the public-service corporations which they control. I have made this suggestion over and over again, and I repeat it now in the most emphatic way that I can, that it is a shame and an outrage that the criminal statutes of this land permit the men who are really responsible absolutely to escape from the penalties of the law, and inflict penalties and punishments upon those who are simply acting under their superior orders. We know how a large number of these corporations are organized, and what I have reference to now are American corporations, because in Great Britain corporations are controlled by laws that are more efficient and severe than ours. Let us look at the scheme a minute.

A number of individuals organize a trust. We call these companies trusts for want of a better name. The promoters absorb and consolidate a number of competing companies, and then, in order to promote the scheme, a bonded indebtedness is created. The promoters in almost every instance get the bonds and the public gets the stock. Then the consolidated company goes into operation and, as a rule, the bondholders, who consist of the individuals who practically own the constituent companies, have very little, if any, interest in the active management of the concern. The president and managing officers—I will not say in all cases, but in a great many instances of the administration of public-service corporations—perform simply perfunctory duties, their position being largely a sinecure, and the management being left to other hands. I know of one railroad accident after another and one steamship accident after another that are entirely due to the negligence of the directorate of the respective companies. Did we ever hear of a director or a president of any public-service corporation being indicted for manslaughter in an American court in any case whatever where the accident was directly attributable to the oversight, neglect, or carelessness of the company's management? American corporations in a number of instances are running loose and wild without curb and without reins. Take the street railroads of Washington. I have never in any city in the Union seen such an utter disregard of the people's rights. I have time and time again intended to offer some measure here to